

Application Serial No. 10/617,401
Reply to Office Action dated June 29, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A refrigerator cabinet assembly ~~comprising~~ comprises:
 - a shell including first and second laterally spaced upstanding side walls which are interconnected by a top wall to define first and second corners, each of said first and second side walls and said top wall including a front edge portion being in-turned to form a flange assembly which defines a liner receiving cavity opening laterally inward of the shell, said flange assembly including at least a front flange leading to a return flange that extends to a rear flange;
 - a mullion extending across the shell and ~~interconnecting the first and second side walls~~; and
 - a reinforcement assembly including first and second reinforcing members, each of said first and second reinforcing members being arranged, at spaced locations, against a ~~respective~~ said rear flange and ~~a corresponding~~ said first side wall.
2. (currently amended) The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 1, wherein each of the first and second reinforcing members include a plurality of mounting apertures, said mounting apertures ~~being adapted to receive~~ receiving a respective plurality of mechanical fasteners, said refrigerator cabinet assembly further including at least one hinge member attached to a respective one of the first and second reinforcing members with the plurality of mechanical fasteners.
3. (currently amended) ~~The refrigerator assembly according to claim 1;~~ A refrigerator cabinet assembly comprising:
 - a shell including first and second laterally spaced upstanding side walls which are interconnected by a top wall to define first and second corners, each of said first and

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second side walls and said top wall including a front edge portion being in-turned to form a flange assembly which defines a liner receiving cavity opening laterally inward of the shell, said flange assembly including at least a front flange leading to a return flange that extends to a rear flange, and wherein the flange assembly further includes a terminal bent section extending from the rear flange, said terminal bent section having at least one opening extending therethrough;

a mullion extending across the shell; and

a reinforcement assembly including first and second reinforcing members, each of said first and second reinforcing members being arranged against a respective said rear flange and a corresponding said side wall.

4. (original) The refrigerator assembly according to claim 3, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcing members includes at least one tab member projecting therefrom, said tab member extending through the opening in the terminal bent section.

5. (original) The refrigerator assembly according to claim 4, wherein the terminal bent section opening is defined by a slot.

6. (original) The refrigerator assembly according to claim 5, wherein said at least one of the first and second reinforcing members includes a plurality of spaced tabs and the terminal bent section is formed with a plurality of slots, each of said plurality of tabs being received within a respective one of said plurality of slots.

7. (original) The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcing members constitutes a corner bracket including a top plate having first and second upper depending flanges and a side plate having first and second side depending flanges, said corner bracket being positioned in the first corner of the shell.

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8. (currently amended) ~~The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 1, A~~
refrigerator cabinet assembly comprising:

a shell including first and second laterally spaced upstanding side walls which are interconnected by a top wall to define first and second corners, each of said first and second side walls and said top wall including a front edge portion being in-turned to form a flange assembly which defines a liner receiving cavity opening laterally inward of the shell, said flange assembly including at least a front flange leading to a return flange that extends to a rear flange;

a mullion extending across the shell; and

a reinforcement assembly including first and second reinforcing members, each of said first and second reinforcing members being arranged against a respective said rear flange and a corresponding said side wall, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcing members constitutes a corner bracket including a top plate having first and second upper depending flanges and a side plate having first and second side depending flanges, said corner bracket being positioned in the first corner of the shell and wherein the corner bracket further includes a plurality of bent tab elements, said bent tab elements projecting from the top and side plates respectively.

9. (original) The refrigerator assembly according to claim 8, wherein the shell is formed from a pre-painted material and the bent tab elements eliminate sharp corners and edges which would cause deformation of the pre-painted material during a foam injection process.

10. (currently amended) The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 3 ~~claim 1~~, wherein at least one of the first and second ~~reinforcement~~ reinforcing members constitutes a stanchion including a front wall, an outer side wall extending substantially perpendicular to the front wall, an inner side wall extending substantially perpendicular to the front wall and parallel to the outer side wall, and a lower frontal plate arranged at a lower portion of the front wall.

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11. (original) The refrigerator according to claim 10, further comprising: an intermediate frontal plate arranged along the front wall of the stanchion.
12. (original) The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 11, wherein the lower frontal plate and intermediate frontal plate are offset from the front wall.
13. (original) The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 11, further comprising: a plurality of tab elements arranged in a spaced relationship along the inner side wall.
14. (currently amended) The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 13, further comprising: a plurality of slotted openings arranged along a lower portion of the terminal bent end section, said plurality of tab elements projecting through the plurality of slotted openings, ~~with~~ when the stanchion is nested behind the rear flange.
15. (original) The refrigerator cabinet assembly according to claim 10, wherein at least one of the first and second reinforcing members constitutes a corner bracket including a top plate having first and second upper depending flanges and a side plate having first and second side depending flanges, said corner bracket being positioned in the first corner of the shell.
- 16-21. (canceled)